Event Management, Vol. 22, pp. 745–765
Printed in the USA.

1525-9951/18 $60.00 + .00
DOI: https://doi.org/10.3727/152599518X15299559637707
E-ISSN 1943-4308
www.cognizantcommunication.com

THE EFFECT OF SPORT TOURISTS' TRAVEL STYLE, DESTINATION AND EVENT CHOICES, AND MOTIVATION ON THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN SMALL-SCALE SPORTS EVENTS

CONSTANTINOS-VASILIOS PRIPORAS,* CHRIS A. VASSILIADIS,†
NIKOLAOS STYLOS,‡ AND ANESTIS K. FOTIADIS§

*Department of Marketing, Branding and Tourism, Middlesex University Business School, London, UK
†Department of Business Administration, University of Macedonia, Thessaloniki, Greece
‡Department of Management, School of Economics, Finance and Management, University of Bristol, Bristol, UK
§College of Communication and Media Science, Zayed University, Abu Dhabi, UAE

This exploratory study investigates whether and in which way motivation and destination, travel, and event selection criteria influence sport tourists' involvement in small-scale events. Thus, a model was developed and tested at a small-scale sport event in Sfendami, Greece. To test the six hypotheses of the proposed model a primary research study was conducted, which received responses from 181 participants. Implementation of the partial least square technique showed that changes in sport tourists' travel style exert a direct and positive effect on involvement, as well as an indirect effect with motivation acting as a mediator; however, perception of destination and events characteristics does not exert a significant influence on participants' involvement. Additionally, the model's ability to predict the motivational aspects of sport tourists' participation was demonstrated. Multidimensional scaling was employed to assist with event service design and improve organizers' capabilities to develop effective promotional strategies.

Key words: Small-scale events; Motivations; Involvement; Partial least squares modeling; Multidimensional scaling

Address correspondence to Constantinos-Vasilios Priporas, Senior Lecturer in Marketing, Department of Marketing, Branding and Tourism, Middlesex University Business School, W107 Williams Building, Hendon Campus, The Burroughs, London NW4 4BT UK. Tel: +44 (0)2084114007; E-mail: C.Priporas@mdx.ac.uk

Introduction

Sfendami Mountain Festival is a small-scale event that takes place annually in a mountainous village in North Greece. When the event project was proposed back in the early 2000s, the founder was considered overoptimistic as nobody in the village believed it would be possible to create an attractive event due to the limited resources available. After a series of successful events, Sfendami Mountain Festival became a well-known athletic event and its mountain bike race an international meeting point that provides cyclists with qualifying races for the Greek Olympic team. The main reason why amateur or professional athletes participate in this event is to enjoy the beautiful rural scenery, enjoy the benefits of participation, and ultimately win a race.

Small scale events can be defined as "minor events where competitors may outnumber the spectators, they are often held annually, with little national media interest and limited economic activity" (Gibson, Kaplanidou, & Kang, 2012, p. 162). Although small-scale events have low visibility and low attendance they are still very important for local societies (Fotiadis, Vassiliadis, & Yeh, 2016). The positive economic impact of sport events on local economies has drawn increased attention from many academics interested in contributing to the optimization of sport events management strategies (Gibson, McIntyre, MacKay, & Riddington, 2005; C. Lee & Taylor, 2005; Sallent, Palau, & Guia, 2011). Sport events are hosted by communities for financial reasons mainly, but they can also contribute in several other ways such as by developing community pride and a community's image in the media (Getz & McConnell, 2014; Gibson, Willming, & Holdna, 2003).

As researchers note, most of the studies in the related literature focus on hallmark or mega-sport events (e.g., Harris, 2014; J. S. Lee, Lee & Park, 2014; Ritchie & Smith, 1991), yet not on small-scale events although their key role for the viability of the host communities has been widely recognized (e.g., Cheung, Mak, & Dixon, 2016; Dwyer, Forsyth, & Spurr, 2005; Gibson et al., 2003). Motives can stimulate a person to take action (Hallmann & Harms, 2012). Participants in an event can be motivated by cultural and social motives, skill development motives, and travel motives (Fotiadis et al., 2016, Georgiadis, Spiliopoulos, Rampotas, & Rampotas, 2006). As a result, different studies noticed that motivation to participate is a crucial indicator of participants' behavior (Deery, Jago, & Fredline, 2004, Sato, Jordan, & Funk 2016, Gröpel, Wegner, & Schüler, 2016). Others claim that destination or travel experience does not affect participation (Getz & Andersson, 2010). In this vein, this study attempts to fill this gap by proposing a model that illustrates sport tourists' decision-making process in terms of participating in small-scale sport events. Although it has been postulated that small-scale events athletes participate on the basis of motivation, involvement (Chang, Stylos, Yeh, & Tung, 2015; Fotiadis, Xie, Li, & Huan, 2016), and travel motive factors, yet the strength and significance of the relationships between these factors have not been examined for this particular type of events. The proposed model relates to the ways motivation, destination and event choice, travel style, and involvement influence the decision making of sport tourists when planning to participate in a small-scale athletic event. This study employs the partial least squares technique (PLS-SEM) to render the involvement of athletes in small-scale sport events as influenced by the aforementioned antecedents. Finally, multidimensional scaling has been employed to obtain a spatial based representation of similarities and dissimilarities among the sport event attractiveness constructs and facilitate event positioning and marketing communication decision-making processes.

Overall, the findings should be of value to both academics and practitioners as they could serve as reference for future studies. From a theoretical point of view, this study highlights the importance of delineating the interrelationships of the factors when predicting participants' involvement in small-scale sport events. Then, as small-scale events generally manage limited resources for an investigation regarding participants' perceptions, motivations, and behaviors, this research is of high significance for small-scale event organizers in understanding sport tourists' decision-making process towards participating in small-scale events. It will further clarify the reasons for selecting destinations and events and how motives, involvement, and travel styles affect selection criteria.

Literature Review

Small-Scale Events

Event management is becoming more and more important for destinations all around the world (Stokes, 2008) and this is the reason why sports event management has developed rapidly over the last few years (Lera-López, Ollo-López, & Rapún-Gárate, 2012). One of the first who examine small-scale events was Higham (1999), who defined small-scale sports events as "regular season sporting competitions (ice hockey, basketball, soccer, rugby leagues), international sporting fixtures, domestic competitions, Masters or disabled sports, and the like" (p. 87). They usually function within existing infrastructures, require minimal investment of public funds, and can generate a reliable and regular flow of sport tourists and sports fans (Higham, 1999). Although small-scale sport events are events with minor national impact, limited media interest, and with the numbers of participants potentially being greater than the audience, small-scale sport events are vital for local economies; this is because they can attract people and money to a destination just for the purposes of participation (Gibson et al., 2012; Wilson, 2006).

These destinations host sport events that may motivate amateur or professional athletes to participate and at the same time promote local services, the consumption of local products, and the use of local facilities (Fotiadis, Vassiliadis et al., 2016). For sport tourists the prime purpose of their trip is first of all to participate and enjoy the specific sport event. Based on that, the quality level of sports experience for the sport tourists is mainly related to the facilities, the service, and the product characteristics of the destination and the event (Bloch, Black, & Lichtenstein, 1989; Jackson & Reeves, 1998; McGehee, Yoon, & Cardenas, 2003; Weed & Bull, 2011).

Involvement

Fotiadis, Xit et al. (2016) found that involvement, travel motives, and motivational factors are interrelated in small-scale events. Amateur athletes' involvement is related to their willingness to spend time and money and make the effort to travel a long distance to the event (Sato et al., 2016). These factors, among others, can affect the way participants choose the location of the sporting event (Ryan & Trauer, 2005). Additionally, involvement is a key construct that captures the notion of participation in sports events (Williams, Patterson, Roggenbuck, & Watson, 1992). The level of involvement in sports can affect participants' behavior, because many of them choose a destination and a specific event because of external factors (Funk & James, 2001), such as specified seminars or specialized product promotion activities that occur during an event. Highly involved participants have been reported to be more competitive and they usually stay overnight prior to and during the competition (McGehee et al., 2003) and usually spend more money and time on their personal interests (Ryan & Trauer, 2005). Highly involved sport tourists will travel farther, longer, and use a more varied means of transport (Getz & Andersson, 2010). These participants tend to travel to domestic and foreign sport event destinations and they do not identify time as a major cause of nonparticipation. Participants are affected by the level of involvement because some of them choose a destination or an event because of external factors (Funk & James, 2001). This conceptualization of the decision-making process starts with the idea that highly involved sports tourists might have different attitudes and behaviors from those that are less involved in the small-scale sport event.

H1: The set of reasons for selecting destinations and events is positively related to the involvement of sport tourists.

Motivation

People participate in recreational activities because of intrinsic and/or extrinsic factors (e.g. social, personal, attitudes) (Tinsley & Tinsley, 1986). With regard to sports some researchers claim that motivational factors include the chance to encounter different cultures, behaviors, attitudes, and values (Chen & Funk, 2010; Turco, Swart, Umilla, & Moodley, 2003). Others argue that the primary motivation is the athletic experience itself and the type of event rather than the travel experience per se (Green & Chalip, 1998). Consequently, the motivation to participate reflects amateur athletes' engagement in sports and main reason for

their journey to the event destination (Deery et al., 2004). Runners that are highly involved tend to be significantly motivated by self-actualized higher-order needs rather than relaxation and socializing. Studies show that different cultures, different behaviors, varying attitudes, and alternative values are some of the motivational factors revealed (Chen & Funk, 2010). However, the athletic experience and the type of event have been identified as primary motivations, while the travel experience has been identified as a secondary motivation (Green & Chalip, 1998). Oppermann and Chon (1997) have shown that association factors, locational factors, personal/business factors, and intervening opportunities are the four sets of variables that influence the participation decision process. Moreover, in Breiter and Milman's (2006) study, it emerged that participants of large exhibition events consider the host destination to be an important factor affecting their decision to attend. Additionally, it was found that destination loyalty is indirectly and positively influenced by event attachment and nature-related travel motives, among others (Halpenny, Kulczycki, & Moghimehfar, 2016). In a study of Fotiadis, Xie et al. (2016) it was found that motivational factors affect decision making. Because a selection of a destination for a participant is considered part of decision making it is expected that it will be positively related to motivational factors.

H2: Selection of destination and events positively affects motivation of sport tourists to participate in sports events.

Travel Style

Chen and Funk (2010) examined the differences between sports tourists and nonsport tourism in terms of their travel style. They have found that there are significant differences in the way they decide on accommodation, historic/cultural attractions, and sport facilities and activities. It was also noticed that young men have different travel styles concerning sport as they usually have an independent traveling mode, and seek information through the technology available rather than through personal communication (Katsoni & Vrondou, 2016).

According to Getz and Andersson (2010), highly involved participants' behavior is different from other sport tourists with whom they compete when their travel frequency, that is, "how often they travel" is considered. As Beaton, Funk, Ridinger, and Jordan (2011) mentioned, it is usual for people to be involved at higher levels if they find the activity enjoyable, central to their lives, and representative of their self-identity. The highly involved athletes tend to participate in more competition-oriented organized sport events and trips, sometimes with other people accompanying them (e.g., family members, friends, etc.) and their event and destination selections can be influenced by the different motivational factors of their travel companions (Getz & Andersson, 2010). For example, Buning and Gibson (2016) found out that travel style is different for participants who travel with their companion. Iwasaki and Havitz (2004) also found that long-term involvement affects loyalty through the creation of commitment. Highly involved participants place greater emphasis on regular and frequent participation in particular sport events and their demand for travel is heavily constrained both in time and space (Robbins, Dickinson, & Calver, 2007). They tend to travel more frequently to destinations where those sport events take place. They meet regularly with other sport tourists and compete directly with them, making the prospective participation list and the final sport event results very important outcomes of their event participation as it provides a ranking of their relative success (Getz & Andersson, 2010).

H3: Changes in the travel style of sport tourists positively affect the level of involvement in sports events.

The changes in travel style can be affected by intrinsic as well as extrinsic motivators, a fact confirmed by previous research in the field of event management (Ogles & Masters, 2003). Personal motivation factors can have an effect on participation because the participants feel that they achieve their own personal goals and reinforce self-improvement as "opposed to social and relaxation motivations" (Getz & Andersson, 2010, p. 473). Highly involved sport tourists might travel far and

perform in many events because they might want to improve their athletic ability, win prize money, challenge themselves, participate in a famous event, or prove to others that they can do it (McGehee et al., 2003). Drawing on an understanding of activity attributes that general recreationists consider personally relevant can potentially provide an understanding of why recreationists are motivated to engage in specific leisure behaviors and explain the reasons underlying their continued involvement (Kyle, Absher, Hammitt, & Cavin, 2006). Interestingly, however, although sport tourists are often motivated by a desire to experience novelty and change, they differ in terms of their willingness to travel in new or unfamiliar ways. Some people prefer the "mass" style of pleasure travel, maintaining a comfortable distance from the host community, while others enjoy a more adventurous and personal experience (Basala & Klenosky, 2001). The underlying logic is that motivations can become the main generators of utility when visiting distant or expensive destinations such that the effects of distance and price on destination choice could alter the motivations, which are part of decision making (Nicolau & Más, 2006).

H4: Changes in the travel style of sport tourists positively affect their motivation to participate in sports events.

According to Getz and Brown (2006), some of the destination and event choice factors are: (1) financial factors such as a low entry fee, the amount of prize money, and low overall cost, (2) personal factors (such as friends also going, or spouse/family wanting to visit the location), and (3) management factors including whether the event is well organized, has exclusive features (difficult to qualify for), provides special travel and accommodation packages, or gets a lot of media coverage. Highly involved sport tourists tend to participate in many different types of events because they select the type of event based on high-order selection criteria such as prestige, novelty, or degree of challenge. This means that the event itself can be more important for them than the event location (Getz & Andersson, 2010, p. 474). Shih (1986) found that psychographic factors such as lifestyle and values are more important than demographics for understanding travel behavior, although Scheiner and Holz-Rau (2007) found that the influence of life situation on travel mode choice exceeds the influence of lifestyle. Lifestyle still plays an important role by affecting attitudes to locations and specific location decisions that in turn influence travel mode. Li and Cai (2011) examined the relationship between travel style and personal values and demonstrated that for one cultural segment (Chinese), the behavioral intentions are affected only by personal internal values.

H5: Changes in the travel style of sport tourists are positively related to the selection criteria associated with the choice of destinations and events.

Motivation and Involvement

As Deery et al. (2004) stated, the classification of a sport event is mainly affected by participants' motivation such that it seems likely that the ones who do continue to participate would be those who are particularly highly motivated (Wiley, Shaw, & Havitz, 2000). One of the key motivational factors according to Rothschild (1984) is involvement, which is considered very important in decision making about a destination or an event. As some participants are more involved in an event, they may have a different level of motivation. In particular, more involved sport tourists are affected by personal motivational factors such as the provision of seminars, product promotion advertising, winning the competition, or improving their skills (Funk & James, 2001; Robinson & Gammon, 2004). Visual and vivid information on pleasure destination attributes will increase both the consumers' involvement and their ability to perceive more differences in service supply (Goossens, 2000).

H6: The motivation of sport tourists to participate in sports events positively affects their level of involvement

Figure 1 demonstrates the factors and relevant research hypotheses to be examined.

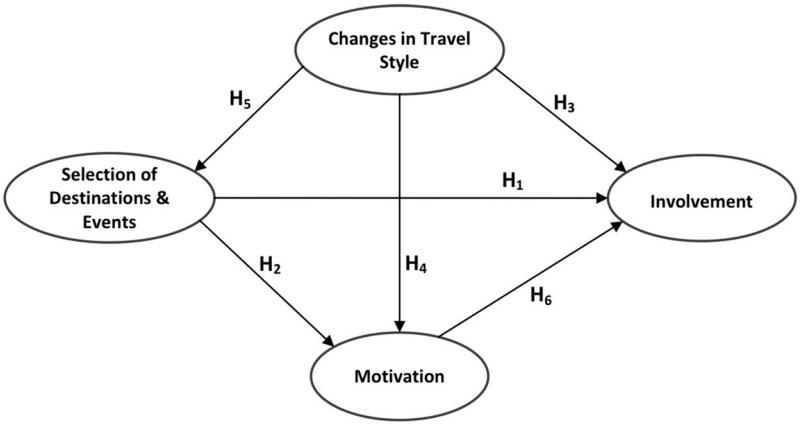

Figure 1. The proposed model with relevant hypotheses.

The Context of the Study

The SMF—Sfendami Mountain Festival (www.sfendami.com)—is an annual 2-day event that takes place in Sfendami, Pieria Province, Greece in mid-April. Sfendami is a village built at an altitude of 160 m and located 25 km from the capital of Pieria, Katerini (Fig. 2). The festival opened in 2007 with mountain bike races, and in the following years mountain running races were added. In 2013, SMF had already been in its seventh year.

The festival occurred in 2013 on April 20 and 21. It included different categories of running races such as the main mountain running race of 22.9 km, a 12,00-m race, a 600-m race, races for children aged 10–12 years, races for children aged 5–9 (where children from 3 years old could also participate accompanied by a parent), a mountain race over 5 km for children aged 12–15 and a "fun-run" for the 15+ age group. Besides the races there was also a series of five seminars, as well as events involving bicycles, rollerblades, balloon races, local

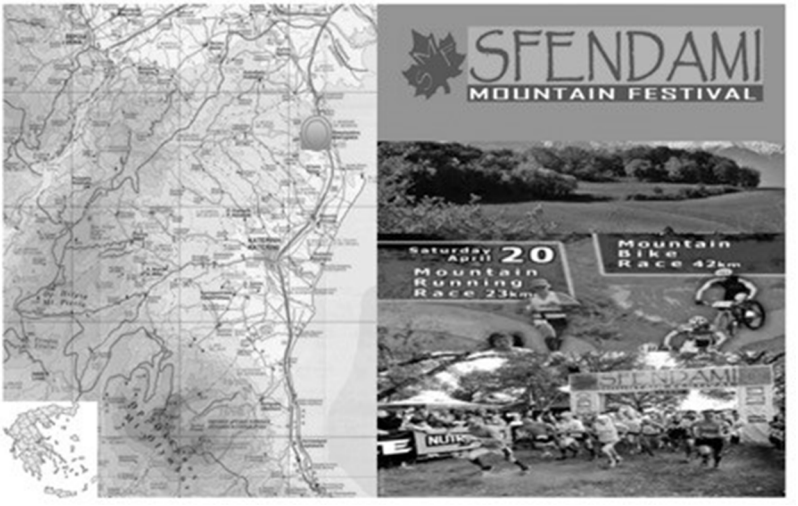

Figure 2. Map of Greece, Pieria region and the Sfendami Mountain Festival; SMF (Source: SMF 2013, Sfendami Pieria, Greece).

delicacies, local customs, and music, all of which were designed to add to the festival atmosphere.

Methodology

Sampling Procedure, Data Collection, and Sample Size

To test the six hypotheses of the proposed model a primary research study was conducted employing mall intercept technique (Malhotra, 2007) via distribution of a self-administered questionnaire at Profitis Elias Hill during the 7th Sfendami Mountain Festival (SMF) on April 20, 2013. A total of 70 undergraduate students worked as field researchers in 35 teams, each consisting of two people. Field researchers informed the sport tourists about the study when they approached the bench of the organizing committee to register for the events. The participants were asked to provide their opinions at the time of arrival after completing their registration for the events. The personal involvement of the researchers meant that assistance was available for possible questions and those participants handed over the completed questionnaires before they moved to the warm-up area. In addition to the introductory section that provides instructions on filling out the questionnaire, the rest of the research instrument consisted of four parts. The first covers registration for the events, the second conceptualizes self-image, the third is the main part of the questionnaire, including all questions relevant to participation and self-motivation factors, and the final part includes some demographic questions.

With respect to response errors, there is no obvious coverage error because all respondents were solely sports tourists who were engaged in running events. In addition, nonresponse error is considered low because only 38 out of the 219 sport tourists' population refused to take part or could not be located to participate in the SMF 2013 field research study, thus resulting in an 82.65% response rate.

In order to prevent any possible measurement errors, a balanced formulation of measurement scales was secured (7-point Likert scale). Moreover, acquiescence on behalf of the respondents was controlled by avoiding any usage of vague or ambiguous wording (Knowles & Condon, 1999). Midpoint responding is another possible response bias of this category of errors that was taken into account during questionnaire construction by including an extra point of response to the 7-point Likert scale, namely "0 = *I don't know/I cannot reply*" (Baumgartner & Steenkamp 2001).

To calculate the required sample size n_0 Cochran's formula was employed (Cochran, 1963, p. 75):

$$n_0 = \frac{z^2 \times p \times (1 - p)}{c^2} \quad [1]$$

and additionally, the minimum returned final sample size n from Cochran's (1977) correction formula is:

$$n = \frac{n_0}{\left(1 + \frac{n_0 - 1}{Pop}\right)} \quad [2]$$

where:

- z = value (1.96 for 95% confidence interval level)
- p = 0.5 or 50% used for sample size needed
- c = confidence interval, expressed as a decimal (e.g., 0.05 = ±5%)
- n_0 = required sample size according to Cochran's formula,
- Pop = Population or subpopulation size (i.e., in this case 219 runners)

Equation 1 suggests a necessary sample size of $n_0 = 384.16 \sim 385$ cases minimum. However, the sample collected greatly exceeds 5% of the population of runners, because (181/219) × 100 = 82.65% >5%; thus, the need for a finite population correction factor is critical to evaluate the minimum final sample size (Israel, 1992).

The corrected minimum critical sample size n is 139.82 ~ 140 runners as calculated by equation 2. Additional sample size recommendations based on power analysis indicate a minimum sample size of 124 runners for PLS-SEM implementation (for minimum detectable $R^2 = 0.10$, max. number of effects on a construct = 3, $\alpha = 0.05$) (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2014, p. 21). Therefore, the sample size of 181 sport tourists is adequate for use

in quantitative analysis, because it exceeds even the most conservative sample size considerations.

Cross-sectional studies regarding behavioral relationships raise concerns about the existence of common method bias (Doty & Glick, 1998; Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). A partial correlation analysis was conducted using a marker variable according to guidelines provided by Lindell and Whitney (2001). This technique is preferable to the common latent factor one, because it reveals the common variance between unrelated factors due to common method bias, rather than natural correlations. A good choice for a marker variable would be one that does not relate theoretically to any of the constructs included in the proposed model. Accordingly, sports performance anxiety was selected as a suitable marker variable in this case, because it does not seem to relate to any of the model constructs. It is defined as a predisposition to appraise sport situations in which performance can be evaluated as threatening, and may cause anxiety reactions, such as autonomic arousal and worry (Smith, Smoll, & Cumming, 2007). Sports performance anxiety was measured by a 15-item scale proposed and tested by Smith, Smoll, Cumming, and Grossbard (2006), meeting the criteria suggested by Lindell and Whitney (2001). Sample items of this scale are "I worry that I won't perform well," "It is hard to concentrate on the running event," "I feel tense in my stomach" (Cronbach's alpha = 0.83).

Table 1
Survey Participant Profile

Characteristics	Percentage
Gender	
Male	75.8%
Female	24.2%
Distance from SMF	
<11 km	15.6%
11–50 km	23.9%
>50 km	60.5%
Family status	
Single	55.9%
Married, no children	7.9%
Married, with children	32.6%
Divorced	3.3%
Widowed	0.3%
Highest level of education	
Primary	4.6%
Intermediate	6.8%
High school	34.2%
College	46.6%
Master	6.2%
Ph.D.	1.6%
Age	
<18	10.5%
18–29	29.5%
30–39	33.8%
40–49	21.6%
50–59	3.0%
≥60	1.6%
Employment status	
Freelance professional	26.2%
Civil servant	16.3%
Private firm employee	25.9%
Student	14.0%
Retired	1.7%
Other	15.9%

Details of the Sample

Table 1 summarizes the survey profile of the 181 nonprofessional runners who responded to the questionnaire out of a total of 216 approached, out of a target population of 219 registered participants.

Variables and Measurement

Preference was given to measurement scales that were previously used in the published literature within an event management or sports-tourism context. That was the case with motivation, travel style, and destinations & events choices constructs, according to the theoretical development that appears in previous sections. Regarding measurement of involvement, a general type of consumer scale was adopted and adapted to the context of this study.

Motivation was measured with 18 statements, covering intrinsic as well as extrinsic motivators, which were adopted from previous research in the field of event management (Ogles & Masters, 2003). These items are located in the respective section in the Appendix and are used as indicators of motivation.

Because participation in events may partially affect travel behavior of participants, "travel styles" construct was introduced to represent the possible changes in the travel style of the sport tourists; it was measured with a 10-item scale that has been previously tested by Getz and Andersson (2010). These particular statements expressing possible

changes in the travel style of the event participants are located in the Appendix.

Modification of a 26-item scale describing destination and event choice factors (Getz & Anderson, 2010) took place in order to adapt to the running events of SMF. The inclusion of this construct may explain a possibly significant relation with involvement, as well as with travel styles (see the Appendix).

Finally, involvement was measured using a 15-item scale, drawn from the consumer involvement profile (Laurent & Kapferer, 1985), and adapted particularly for application in sports events. Involvement items are the C11 to C115 group of questions shown in the Appendix. All measurements were made on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *totally disagree* to 7 = *totally agree*.

Method and Data Analysis

The methodological steps that were taken in order to enhance the content validity and reliability of the measurements follow. First, an extensive literature review took place to enable the measurements of the constructs to be identified. The scales developed by Getz and Andersson (2010) for sports events were used for reasons of consistency. The translation of the questionnaire from English to Greek was assigned to a professional translator and then it was translated back from Greek to English to verify the quality and accuracy of the translated scales. After the instrument was initially constructed, it was sent to the organizing committee of the 7th SMF (7 former or active athletes) for an evaluation of the measurement items. Upon receiving the comments from the expert panel, the questionnaire was revised based on the inputs provided. A pilot study was conducted that asked the opinions of 64 undergraduate business administration students, with respect to the construction of the questionnaire. Finally, the main data collection process produced 181 usable questionnaires with none of the submitted questionnaires being rejected.

Quantitative Techniques for Model Evaluation

Implementation of missing values analysis (MVA) on the data set obtained revealed through Little's (1988) MCAR test that all missing values are completely at random, which confirmed that the corresponding H0 could not be rejected [$\chi^2(5,179) = 5317.53$, sig.= 0.912].

A structural equation modeling approach using partial least squares (PLS) technique was employed in order to measure, estimate, and confirm the latent constructs, as well as to test the significance of the paths between constructs; its ability to handle a relatively small sample size makes it particularly suitable for predictive purposes and theory building (Loureiro & González, 2008). Because the target population of the 7th SMF running event was only 219 participants in total, it was clear that PLS technique was the best tool to use for quantitative analysis.

Results

Measurement Model

The item scales that have been used to measure the four key constructs (motivation, involvement, travel style, and destinations & events choices) of the proposed model are all borrowed from Getz and Andersson (2010). The factorial scheme of PLS-Graph 3.0 was used to conduct a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) (Esposito-Vinzi, Trinchera, & Amato, 2010) in order to explicitly specify the pattern of loadings of the measurement items on the latent constructs in the model. Based on the confirmatory factor analysis results obtained in the outer model, the convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability of all the multiple-item scales were assessed against the guidelines published in previous literature (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). The use of an iterative application of CFA in multiple steps has refined the proposed list of 99 to a more sport relevant collection of 29 variables. The construct "destinations & events choices" was finally determined by 9 indicators, "travel styles" kept 8 items out of 10, "motivation" involved 7 indicators only, and 5 variables remained for "involvement" after applying CFA to its 15-item initial scale. Composite reliabilities (CR), average variance extracted (AVE) values, as well as loadings and *t* statistics are above published threshold limits (Bagozzi & Kimmel, 1995; Dillon

Table 2
Assessment of the Final Measurement Model

Construct/Item	Mean (*SD*)	Loading	*SE*	*t*-Statistic	CR	AVE
Destinations & events choices					0.843	0.576
Special travel & accommodation packages are provided (C48)	4.49 (1.49)	0.681	0.0402	6.482		
Competitors receive great gifts (C49)	3.61 (1.57)	0.607	0.0395	4.630		
Involvement of a major corporate sponsor (C412)	3.42 (1.56)	0.593	0.0391	5.093		
It's in a world class destination (C420)	4.23 (1.23)	0.734	0.0363	7.392		
Entertainment available in the area (C422)	4.52 (1.41)	0.532	0.0423	2.661		
The reputation & prestige of the event (C423)	5.03 (1.25)	0.596	0.0312	6.753		
A party is included in the fee (C424)	4.61 (1.46)	0.597	0.0369	2.428		
Timing every third minute & the result is sent as a text message (C425)	3.60 (1.70)	0.671	0.0309	4.209		
The running event is part of Greek circuit (C426)	4.37 (1.35)	0.573	0.0455	3.062		
Travel styles (Have you changed with regard to…)					0.855	0.721
Traveling far to events? (C31)	4.63 (1.84)	0.659	0.0239	9.427		
Selecting events on the basis of destination attractiveness? (C33)	4.58 (1.46)	0.594	0.0226	8.377		
Traveling to events by air? (C34)	3.20 (1.64)	0.562	0.0271	5.193		
Traveling throughout the year? (C35)	4.21 (1.63)	0.768	0.0210	10.981		
Going to international events? (C36)	3.66 (1.76)	0.696	0.0223	9.576		
Combining events with holidays? (C37)	4.65 (1.53)	0.628	0.0212	7.875		
Competing in prestigious events? (C38)	4.36 (1.57)	0.636	0.0285	6.158		
Taking long trips? (C310)	4.53 (1.56)	0.628	0.0221	8.484		
Motivation					0.794	0.594
Travel to interesting places (C28)	5.43 (1.25)	0.716	0.0393	8.650		
Do something unusual (C29)	5.15 (1.27)	0.566	0.0557	3.352		
To improve my time (C210)	5.52 (1.23)	0.584	0.0465	3.505		
Prepare for more important events (C211)	4.85 (1.47)	0.741	0.0655	6.695		
Prove to myself that I can do it (C213)	5.64 (1.24)	0.624	0.0429	5.563		
For health benefits; to get fit (C218)	5.70 (1.19)	0.562	0.0446	3.661		
Involvement					0.781	0.678
Others probably say I spend too much time training for events (C17)	4.06 (1.59)	0.578	0.0636	3.253		
Each year I spend a lot of money on running equipment (C112)	3.99 (1.60)	0.663	0.0579	5.409		
Each year I spend a lot of money traveling to running events (C114)	3.81 (1.67)	0.799	0.0407	10.486		
I read a lot about running in specialized magazines and books (C115)	4.90 (1.67)	0.759	0.0531	8.595		

Note. All *t*-statistics are significant at 0.01 level. CR, composite reliability; AVE, average variance extracted.

& Goldstein, 1984; Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2010) (see Table 2).

Common method variance was also employed using the marker-variable technique. Any high correlation among the career trajectory constructs and sport performance anxiety (labeled as SPANXIETY) would be an indication of common method bias (Lindell & Whitney 2001). In this study, correlations between the marker variable and the principal constructs of our model have been found uniformly low (see Table 3). Therefore, common bias effects will not affect the findings of our research.

Structural Model

After the CFA procedure and relevant pruning and confirmation of the scales concluded, the structure of the model was developed with path analysis testing the six causal relationships described in the hypotheses. At this point, a reconfirmation of the scales derived from CFA took place by generating three consecutive bootstraps. Two more items (C16 and C22) were pruned due to the resulting values of *t* statistic being less than 1.96. The reliability and validity assessments achieved satisfactory values

Table 3
Correlations Among Constructs of Career Trajectory Model and With Marker Variable Included

Factors	INVOLV	MOTIV	TRAVST	DESTEVCHOICE	SPANXIETY
INVOLV	1.000				
MOTIV	0.382	1.000			
TRAVST	0.233	0.283	1.000		
DESTEVCHOICE	0.273	0.461	0.316	1.000	
SPANXIETY	−0.046	0.007	−0.036	−0.067	1.000

Note. INVOLV, Involvement; MOTIV, Motivation; TRAVST, Travel styles; DESTEVCHOICE, Destinations & events choices; SPANXIETY, Sport performance anxiety.

(above 0.781) and improved AVE values ranging from 0.512 to 0.622 for the final model arrangement (4 constructs, 27 indicators), as shown in Figure 3.

The significance of the paths was tested using regression weights and *t* statistics to calculate the corresponding *p*-values, (see Fig. 4). As indicated by path loadings and the associated significance levels, the influences of destination and event choice factors on involvement (β = 0.122) and motivation (β = 0.144) were not significant at the 0.05 level leading to the rejection of both H1 and H2. However, a significant path loading (β = 0.347, $p < 0.001$) suggested the significant influence of changes in travel style onto involvement, thus supporting H3. Moreover, the regression weights of the paths from changes in travel style to motivation (β = 0.277, $p < 0.001$) and to destination and event choice factors (β = 0.437, $p < 0.001$) were also significant, providing support for H4 and H5. The significant path loading for motivation to involvement ($\beta = 0.230$, $p < 0.001$) provided strong evidence of its significant influence on involvement, thus supporting H6. Hence, changes in travel style affect sport tourists' involvement directly, as well as indirectly via motivation. Putting it in a different way, motivation supports a case of partial mediation between changes in travel styles and involvement at 0.01 level of significance. All these results are summarized in Table 4.

Also, coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2) values are important for quantifying the predictive capabilities

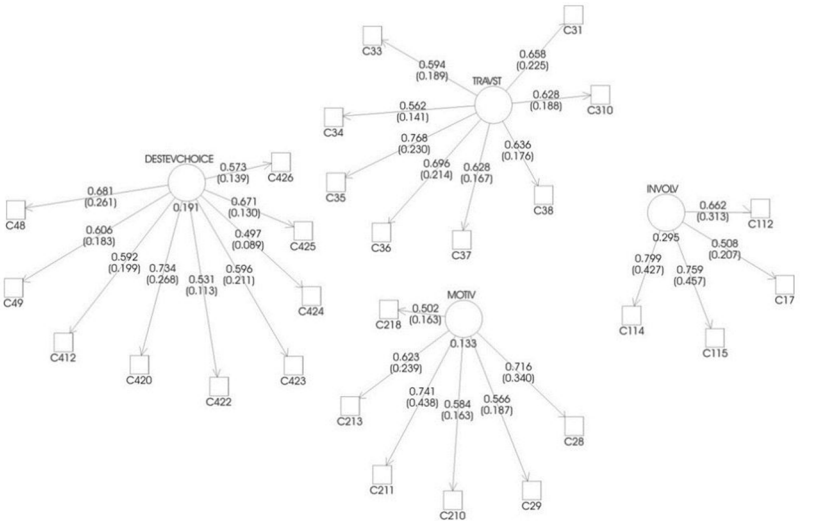

Figure 3. Final indicator structures for the latent variables included in the model.

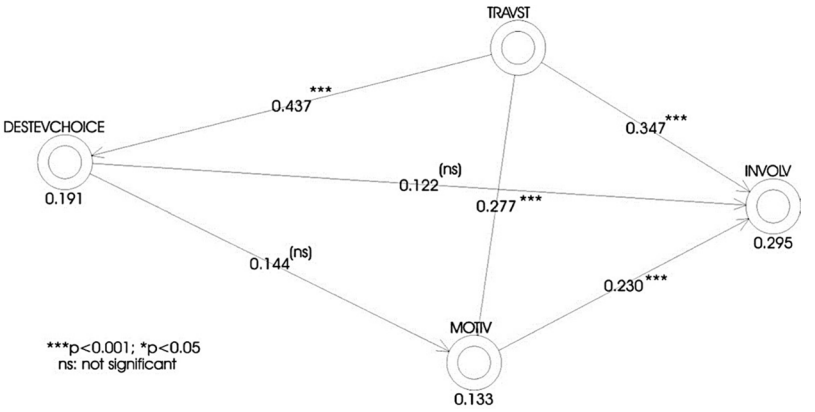

Figure 4. Regression weights and squared multiple correlation coefficients of structural model.

of the first-order model. As shown in Figure 4, the proposed model has relatively good prediction power. According to Cohen (1988), squared multiple correlation R^2 values of 0.01, 0.09, and 0.25 indicate small, medium, and large effects, respectively, in behavioral sciences. In our case, the model explained 0.295 (>0.25) or 29.5% of the variance in the involvement latent variable. Notwithstanding that the explanatory power of motivation and destination & event choices are somewhat low (13.3% and 19.1%, respectively), the degree of variance explained for involvement is considered satisfactory. The changes in R^2 value when exogenous variables are omitted from the model are provided by the f^2 effect size; as shown in Table 5 the effect sizes of all constructs on endogenous latent variable involvement are relatively small ($0.02 < f^2 < 0.15$) (Cohen, 1988). Finally, using the blindfolding procedure for executing the Stone-Geisser test with an omission distance D = 7, we conclude that the proposed model is of high quality suggesting high predictive relevance for all endogenous constructs; Q^2 values were found 0.026, 0.038, and 0.106 for destination & event choices, motivation, and involvement, respectively, thus satisfying the criterion $Q^2 > 0$.

Discussion

One of the main goals of this study was to examine the relationships between motivation, involvement, destinations & events choices, and travel

Table 4
Hypotheses Testing and Conclusions

Hypothesis	Result
H1: The set of reasons for selecting destinations and events is positively related to the involvement of sport tourists	Not supported
H2: Selection of destinations and events positively affects motivation of sport tourists to participate in sports events	Not supported
H3: Changes in the travel style of sport tourists positively affect the level of involvement in sports events	Confirmed
H4: Changes in the travel style of sport tourists positively affect their motivation to participate in sports events	Confirmed
H5: Changes in the travel style of sport tourists are positively related with the selection criteria of destinations and events	Confirmed
H6: The motivation of sport tourists to participate in sports events positively affects their level of involvement	Confirmed

Table 5
Effect Size f^2 Values

Factors	DESTEVCHOICE	INVOLV	MOTIV	TRAVST
DESTEVCHOICE		0.037	0.052	
INVOLV				
MOTIV		0.076		
TRAVST	0.096	0.087	0.051	

style. As the results indicate, there is a significant relationship between motivation and involvement. As Kim, James, and Kim (2013) highlighted there is a link between psychological connection motives and continuance commitment, which is defined as a self-interest relationship. One of the main motives for involvement for amateur cyclists is the social aspect (Brown, O'Connor, & Barkatsas, 2009; Wegner, Bohnacker, Mempel, Teubel, & Schüler, 2014). Thus, any psychological connections with other coparticipants are an important motive for runners due to engaging in the regularity, depth, and breadth of running-related behaviors (Beaton et al., 2011). Funk and Bruun (2007) explored the relationship between involvement and motivation and found that there was a relationship with socio-opsychological motivation and cultural education motivation. The results show that motivation strongly affects involvement in small-scale community-based sport events, as had been hypothesized, because, according to Pham (1992), involvement reflects people's motivation to process information. Moreover, the influence of motivation on involvement in events is further supported by Goossens (2000), who referred to affective involvement as a construct that occurs when a person identifies a new stimulus (i.e., a motive).

In their study, Gröpel et al. (2016) investigated three different studies and they came up with similar results for all of them. In all cases achievement is an important motive for athlete's event choice. Healy, Ntoumanis, and Duda (2016) said that there is a relationship between the level of goals and motives, because facilitation between goals occurs when identified goal motives are high. In their study, Kerr and Houge Mackenzie (2012) found that there is a variety of motives that affect participation such as goal achievement and escape from boredom. Similarly, the results in our study indicate there are significant and positive effects exerted from travel style changes on the degree of motivation, the development of destinations and the events selection criteria, and involvement. The present study provides novel insight into the travel style behavior of amateur athletes. Firstly, changes in travel style is a pivotal construct for conceptualizing the tourist-career trajectory, since all effects stemming from this exogenous variable have been confirmed. The significant and positive effects it exerts on the degree of motivation, the development of destinations and the events selection criteria, and involvement are clearly supported by the results and confirm that it is an influential factor in terms of further developing small-scale sports events. Apart from the direct influence of travel style changes on involvement, which is similar to the findings of Berne and García-Uceda (2008), a new and indirect influence via motivation has been revealed indicating partial mediation, and thus increasing the explanatory value of the proposed model.

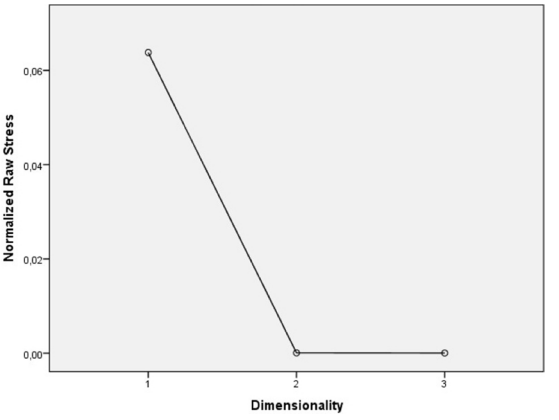

Figure 5. Scree plot.

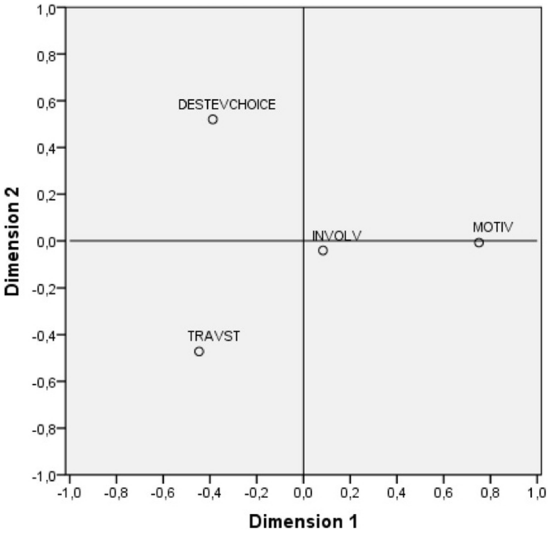

Figure 6. Common space presentation of the MDS analysis.

Nevertheless, data analysis did not provide evidence for significant influences on motivation and involvement originating from the selection criteria used by the nonprofessional sport tourists. In all, changes in travel style are the centerpiece of athletes' participation in small-scale sport events and significantly affect both motivation and involvement.

Graphical Representation of Results

The utility of the results presented and analyzed above can be further extended by obtaining a spatial-based representation of the four latent constructs employing multidimensional scaling (MDS) via the PROXSCAL algorithm (Torgerson option).

First, a scree plot is employed to reveal the ideal dimensionality of the graphical solution. A solution with the fewest possible dimensions is "more economical" for the estimation process and "it's easier to interpret" through a visual representation like the object points-type graphs (Janssens, Wijnen, de Pelsmacker, & Van Kenhove, 2008). Figure 5 clearly shows that the two-dimensional solution is optimal.

The "normalized raw stress" and "stress-I" values have been found 0.00041 and 0.02025, respectively, for the two-dimensional graphical representation, after the PROXSCAL algorithm has run three iterations. The lowest possible values for "normalized raw stress" and "stress-I" are desirable (Borg & Groenen, 2005). Therefore, in our case the solution for depicting the dissimilarities among the four factors in a two-dimensions graph is possible and acceptable. Differences between the four dimensions of the proposed model have been identified through an "object points" type graph with a common space analysis (Young, 2013). Based on the results of the two-dimensional solution analysis (Fig. 6) we conclude that there are greater differences between motivation and event and destination choices, as well as motivation and travel styles, with mean differences of 1.255 and 1.284, respectively. On the other hand, smaller mean differences have resulted from the relationships formed by involvement with the rest of the factors; the smaller dissimilarity emerged from the relationship between involvement and motivation, as shown on Table 6, with a value of 0.668.

Practical Implications

In practice, the small distances of motivation, destination & event choices, and travel styles from involvement show that these factors are closely connected to respondents' perceptions. Especially in the case of the motivation–involvement relationship, the notional proximity of this pair of factors

Table 6
Dissimilarities Based on Proximities Table of PROXSCAL Analysis

Factors	INVOLV	MOTIV	TRAVST	DESTEVCHOICE
INVOLV	0.00			
MOTIV	0.668	0.00		
TRAVST	0.683	1.284	0.00	
DESTEVCHOICE	0.733	1.255	0.994	0.00

in explaining athletes' involvement is revealed. From a practitioner's point of view the motivational aspects are related to sport tourists' greater persistence, positive emotions, interest in participating, and satisfaction derived from the sport events; therefore, it is important to focus on cost-effective promotional strategies and practices that affect sport tourists' self-perceptions (Deci & Ryan, 2002). Competent and self-determined sport tourists' perceptions related to "health benefits; to get fit" (mean value = 5.70), "prove to myself that I can do it" (5.64), "time improvement opportunities" (5.52), "travel to interesting places" (5.43), and "opportunities to doing something unusual" (5.15) are very important elements for building a strong sport event promotional strategy via increased participants' involvement.

Furthermore, in order to provide some greater depth to these findings and support managerial practice, the 4Cs concept (i.e., choice, convenience, communication, and cost) proposed by Lauterborn (1990) has been implemented. This way relevant marketing tactics may arise that would feed in specific sports event marketing strategies (Constantinides, 2006). Table 7 provides an overview of suggested marketing tactics and strategies.

Conclusions

The main contribution of this research is that it tests a new framework that examines sport tourists' participation in small-scale sport events. It also refines the measurement scales of the constructs proposed by Getz and Andersson (2010) into a set of items that is more relevant to small-scale sport activities. Most studies have investigated the relationship between motivations and involvement in large-scale events such as mega-events or major events (Absalyamov, 2015; Emery, 2010; Fourie & Santana-Gallego, 2011; C. Lee & Taylor, 2005). Usually small-scale event organizers do not have enough resources (Y. Lee, Kim, & Koo, 2016; Yolal, Gursoy, Uysal, Kim, & Karacaoğlu, 2016) to attract the athletes and the audience they wish, so they have to be very careful about what they offer and how they treat their participants as mistakes can lead to significant problems. That is one of the reasons why this study can contribute significantly to small-scale event management tactics.

The results suggest that marketing practice and strategy could be more successful if small-scale event organizers built a communication plan based on the motivation and involvement factors that are the most attractive to the highly motivated sport tourist. In our case, the four basic theoretical constructs comprising the proposed model can be transformed into a two-dimensional common space graphical model, which the manager can use to identify the differences between the motivation and destination choice factors, as well as to identify which motivation and travel style characteristics are the highest. The use of those theoretical construct pairs can be a very a useful process for the development of specific customer-oriented marketing programs through identification of differences among sport tourists. Therefore, entertainment and festivities in the local area of the sport event destination can motivate the group of sport event visitors to visit the area because they may feel that this place is an interesting one where they can pursue exceptional or unusual activities. Overall, this research has shown that the constructs suggested by Getz and Andersson (2010) have similar applicability to the small-scale sport athletic events as well supporting a specific model structure.

This study is not free of limitations. Testing of the causal model has been restricted to a highly localized setting. At the moment the SMF has only attracted Greek sport tourists and it was not possible to examine foreign sport tourists' motivations and involvement as a separate segment. New studies should include more locations within urban Greece, participants from other countries and other rural localities in Greece and overseas. Also, the findings of this study should be cross-checked in various international settings, scales, and kinds of sports events (e.g., cycling). Furthermore, demographics such as age and educational level, as well as other social factors (e.g., social class) could serve as control or moderating variables in predicting sport tourists' involvement in future studies. Finally, this study utilized partial least squares technique; forthcoming studies could employ different methods and analyses (e.g., covariance-based structural equation modeling [CB-SEM]) to check applicability of the proposed model at a medium or large-scale athletic event.

Table 7
Practical Implications: Conceptual Relations Between 4Cs and the Involvement Factors as the Results of our Study

Involvement Affect 4Cs	Destination Choice > Involvement	Motivational Aspects > Involvement	Travel Style > Involvement
Choice (Customer needs and wants)	**Create synergies with sponsors** (i.e., Greek running circuit etc.) **or potential enterprises and entrepreneurs & partners** (local and nonlocal enterprises, institutions, organizations), with the scope to offer for the sport-tourists **many more attractive product choices or product packages** about: accommodations, food & beverages, sport event facilities and services, entertainment, retail, attractions & transport services.	By designing the product and service offer give emphasis to sport tourists' motivational aspects, and specially, to: a) **Healthy product and services** offer (i.e., like health-oriented seminars for the sport tourists or offer to them healthy local food and beverages and advices for a healthy life style, b) **Unique & unusual service and product offer**, like free of use local public and unique colored, transportation means. Explain: c) **how can athletes improve their skills—maybe also for another future running event, and d) how to enjoy their visit in the place.**	**Take care of sport tourist facilities that may offer athletes more benefits during their trip** (synergies with retail service offer partners, extra facilities and alternatives for the sport tourists, free information), because **they like to travel far away for attractive destinations with interesting for them sport events**. **They enjoy that kind of destinations especially when they make their summer or winter vacations** (holidays).
Place Convenience (easy of buying, easy to visit and enjoy the place without problems)	Give information to the sport tourists, about the: a) **destination characteristics**, **the sport event terrain, the physical environment of the place and the local conditions**, b) **tickets, coupons, sport buying alternatives, the easiness to drive and park and other facilities, and services to and in the area**, c) **the opportunities to stay, to check in, and check out by the local accommodations**, d) **the special travel opportunities to buy special packages, and tickets for day and night entertainment, catering in local enterprises or special events in or near the sport event area.**	Give information to the sport tourists, about the: a) **opportunities to find more easy health products and services in or near the sport event area**, b) **support that the sport tourists can have through e-mails, teleconference tech, websites, blogs & social networks, and the opportunity to be in contact with other members about the availability of special products and services**, c) **unusual things to do and were easier to find, enjoy, or also to by the services,** d) **things to do to improve your time in the specific sport event area or near to the sport event local area**, e) **easiness to control the personal skills and to prove yourself because of the use of, i.e., Wi-Fi, appropriate and supportive for runners new technology.**	Give information to the sport tourists, about the: a) **ways and opportunities to make more easy for them the combination between sport events and sport tourists' holiday alternative activities and the related travel planning activities for them**, b) **time management opportunities** (i.e., time to travel from the departure place to the arrival destination, time and facilities to travel to the sport destination, etc.), and also c) **explain why the sport tourist's experience by traveling far away can be a unique experience for him** (i.e., by explaining how they can prepare their travel plan better because of the more time they have on the plane or the train etc.), d) **social recognition by word of mouth applications by selecting appropriate sport event destinations with attractions and other interesting special unique services or facility offers** for them (i.e., by using easier to the arrival destination free or very suitable for their needs e-tech apps), **or by enjoying the extra buying and shopping therapy opportunities they can have.**

Communication (win to win, give and take)	Be creative by **combining and building the promotion of the place and event brands**, also **present due Ads the reputation of the event** (i.e., history, place, facilities, attractions) **and also the opportunity for social prestige that can be the outcome of tourists' sport participation** (social interaction & entertainment, party, special sport tourist packages). For low cost communication purposes, use mostly the website and the related e-smart tech applications (tablets, smart-TV, smart mobile phones, smart sport watches, PCs).	Reinforce with promotion activities the sport tourists about their benefits because of sport tourists' greater persistence. Invest on cost effective promotional strategies and practices that affect sport-tourists' self-perceptions. Important benefits to promote are: **health benefits**, **self-improvement, visit interesting for them places**, **being unusual** (use sales promotion i.e., coupons, discounts, radio, ads, press release, websites & direct mailing). For low cost communication purposes, use mostly the website and the related e-smart tech applications (tablets, smart-TV, smart mobile phones, smart sport watches, PCs).	Advertising focusing on the benefits of sports that overcome the obstacles created originally because of sport tourist travel cost perceptions; the cost of effort due to the geographical distance of the event and the associated costs is replaced by the **benefit of the beauty of nature and the landscape**, the **possibility of combining vacations, sports, competition and fun with friends and special athletes** who can create a unique unforgettable experience for them (use e-media, radio and printing material). For low cost communication purposes, use mostly the website and the related e-smart tech applications (tablets, smart-TV, smart mobile phones, smart sport watches, PCs).
Cost (Cost to satisfy)	**Use of sport tourist metrics** (i.e., total value for money, value per level of involvement, perceived value, value per buying product item) **for the evaluation of sport tourists' perceived cost-based consumer buying behavior criteria.** Give more emphasis to the above-mentioned **destination & product choice sport tourist criteria, that are related with attractive for them product choices (special packages) and their related perceived cost measurement metrics (**e.g., accommodations, food & beverages, sport-event facilities and services, entertainment, retail, attractions & transport services). **Evaluate and present the results and use them for marketing strategy managerial applications** (i.e., explain your competitive pricing strategy per sport tourist destination choice benefit).	**Use of sport tourist metrics** (i.e., total value for money, value per level of involvement, perceived value, value per buying product item) **for the evaluation of sport tourists' perceived cost-based consumer buying behavior criteria.** Give emphasis to the above-mentioned **motivational buying behavior sport tourists' criteria, namely the**: a) **healthy product and services**, b) **unique & unusual service and product offer**, c) **information of how can athletes improve their skills—maybe also for another future running event, and,** d) **how to enjoy their visit in the place. Combine the motivational criteria with perceived cost metrics and evaluate and present the results and use them for managerial applications. Evaluate and present the results and use them for managerial applications** [i.e., explain to the sport-tourists your competitive pricing strategy per the above-mentioned motivational aspect(s)].	**Use of sport tourist metrics** (i.e., total value for money, value per level of involvement, perceived value, value per buying product item) **for the evaluation of sport tourists' perceived cost-based consumer behavior criteria.** Give emphasis to your pricing strategy to the above-mentioned **travel style buying behavior sport-tourists' criteria, namely**: a) **more benefits to the athletes during their long trip** (synergies with retail service offer partners, extra facilities and alternatives for the sport tourists, free information), b) other benefits from traveling **far away to attractive destinations with interesting for them sport events**. c) **benefits from the opportunity to combine their summer or winter vacations** (holidays)**. Evaluate and present the results and use them for managerial applications** [i.e., explain to the sport-tourists your competitive pricing strategy using the above mentioned travel style benefits].

Appendix: Measurement Scales for Motivation, Destination & Event Choice, Travel Style, and Involvement (Getz & Andersson, 2010)

Involvement	Destination & Event Choice	Motivation
(C11) Without running I would be bored	(C41) A lot of prize money is awarded	(C21) To challenge myself
(C12) I really hate it when an event is poorly organized	(C42) A low entry fee	(C22) Improve my athletic ability
(C13) The events I compete in say a lot about the kind of person I am	(C43) Keeping my overall cost low	(C23) Win prize money
(C14) Others consult me about my expertise in running	(C44) The larger the better (many participants)	(C24) Be with my family or spouse
(C15) I might lose valued friends if I gave up running	(C45) My friends are also going	(C25) Be with my friends
(C16) Running takes up so much time it leaves little for other activities	(C46) My spouse or family wants to go there	(C26) Participate in a famous event
(C17) Others probably say I spend too much time training for events	(C47) The event is really well organized	(C27) Be in a famous city or area
(C18) Competing is a particularly pleasurable experience	(C48) Special travel and accommodation packages are provided	(C28) Travel to interesting places
(C19) I would rather be a competitive runner/bicyclist than do any other activity	(C49) Competitors receive great gifts	(C29) Do something unusual
(C110) It requires a lot of thought to select the best events to compete in	(C410) The course is fast	(C210) To improve my time
(C111) I attach great importance to my target times	(C411) It's exclusive (difficult to qualify for)	(C211) Prepare for more important events
(C112) Each year I spend a lot of money on running equipment	(C412) Involvement of a major corporate sponsor	(C212) Prove to others that I can do it
(C113) I belong to a running club or team	(C413) I want a new event experience every time	(C213) Prove to myself that I can do it
(C114) Each year I spend a lot of money traveling to running events	(C414) A recommendation to attend the event from someone I trust	(C214) Have fun!
(C115) I read a lot about running specialized magazines and books	(C415) The event gets a lot of media coverage	(C215) For the thrill of it!
Travel style	(C416) It's a very scenic, interesting route	(C216) Raise money for charity
Have you changed with regard to . . .	(C417) The expected weather conditions are attractive	(C217) Meet new people
(C31) Traveling far to events?	(C418) Small and intimate (few competitors)	(C218) For health benefits; to get fit
(C32) Traveling to many events?	(C419) A party atmosphere surrounding the event	
(C33) Selecting events on the basis of destination attractiveness?	(C420) It's in a world-class city or destination	
(C34) Traveling to events by air?	(C421) Everything I need to know is on a user-friendly website	
(C35) Traveling throughout the year?	(C422) Entertainment available in the area	
(C36) Going to international events?	(C423) The reputation and prestige of the event	
(C37) Combining events with holidays?	(C424) A party is included in the fee	
(C38) Competing in prestigious events?	(C425) Timing every third minute and the result is sent as a text message	
(C39) Taking family along to events?	(C426) The marathon is part of the Hellenic classic circuit	
(C310) Taking long trips?		

References

Absalyamov, T. (2015). The influence of cultural and sport mega-events on sustainable development of the city. *Procedia–Social and Behavioral Sciences, 188*, 197–201.

Bagozzi, R., & Kimmel, S. K. (1995). A comparison of leading theories for the prediction of goal-directed behaviours. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 34*(4), 437–461.

Basala, S. L., & Klenosky, D. B. (2001). Travel-style preferences for visiting a novel destination: A conjoint investigation across the novelty-familiarity continuum. *Journal of Travel Research, 40*(2), 172–182.

Baumgartner, H., & Steenkamp, J-B. E. M. (2001). Response styles in marketing research: A cross-national investigation. *Journal of Marketing Research, 38*(2), 143–156.

Beaton, A. A., Funk, D. C., Ridinger, L., & Jordan, J. (2011). Sport involvement: A conceptual and empirical analysis. *Sport Management Review, 14*(2), 126–140.

Berne, C., & García-Uceda, M. E. (2008). Criteria involved in evaluation of trade shows to visit. *Industrial Marketing Management, 37*(5), 565–579.

Bloch, P., Black, W., & Lichtenstein, D. (1989). Involvement with the equipment component of sport: Links to recreational commitment. *Leisure Sciences, 11*(3), 187–200.

Borg, I., & Groenen, P. J. F. (2005). *Modern multidimensional scaling: Theory and applications.* New York, NY: Springer.

Breiter, D., & Milman, A. (2006). Attendees' needs and service priorities in a large convention center: Application of the importance–performance theory. *Tourism Management, 27*(6), 1364–1370.

Brown, T., O'Connor, J., & Barkatsas, N. (2009). Instrumentation and motivation for organized cycling: The development of the Cyclist Motivation Instrument (CMI). *Journal of Sports Science and Medicine, 8*(2), 211–218.

Buning, R. J., & Gibson, H. J. (2016). The role of travel conditions in cycling tourism: Implications for destination and event management. *Journal of Sport & Tourism, 20*(3–4), 175–193.

Chang, L. H., Stylos, N., Yeh, S. S., & Tung, Y. Y. (2015). How do motivation, pre-visit information search and destination image affect post-visit behavioural intention? The case of an island destination. *European Journal of Tourism Research, 9*, 8–23.

Chen, N., & Funk, D. C. (2010). Exploring destination image, experience and revisit intention: A comparison of sport and non-sport tourist perceptions. *Journal of Sport Tourism, 15*(3), 239–259.

Cheung, S. Y., Mak, J. Y., & Dixon, A. W. (2016). Elite active sport tourists: Economic impacts and perceptions of destination image. *Event Management, 20*(1), 99–108.

Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Cochran, W. G. (1963). *Sampling techniques* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.

Cochran, W. G. (1977). *Sampling techniques* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.

Constantinides, E. (2006). The marketing mix revisited: Towards the 21st century marketing. *Journal of Marketing Management,* 22(3–4), 407–438.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2002). Self-determination research: Reflections and future directions. In E. L. Deci & R. M. Ryan (Eds.), *Handbook of self-determination research* (pp. 431–441). Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press.

Deery, M., Jago, L., & Fredline, L. (2004). Sport tourism or event tourism: Are they one and the same? *Journal of Sport & Tourism, 9*(3), 235–245.

Dillon, W. R., & Goldstein, M. (1984). *Multivariate analysis: Methods and applications.* New York, NY: Wiley.

Doty, H. D., & Glick, W. H. (1998). Common methods bias: Does common methods variance really bias results? *Organizational Research Methods, 1*(4), 374–406.

Dwyer, L., Forsyth, P., & Spurr, R. (2005). Estimating the impacts of special events on an economy. *Journal of Travel Research, 43*(4), 351–359.

Emery, P. (2010). Past, present, future major sport event management practice: The practitioner perspective. *Sport Management Review, 13*(2), 158–170.

Esposito-Vinzi, V., Trinchera, L., & Amato, S. (2010). PLS path modeling: From foundations to recent developments and open issues for model assessment and improvement. In V. Esposito-Vinzi, W. W. Chin, J. Henseler, & H. Wang (Eds.), *Handbook of partial least squares: Concepts, methods and applications* (pp. 47–82). Berlin, Germany: Springer-Verlag.

Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research, 18*(1), 39–50.

Fotiadis, A., Vassiliadis, C., & Yeh, S. (2016). Participant's preferences for small-scale sporting events: A comparative analysis of a Greek and a Taiwanese cycling event. *EuroMed Journal of Business, 11*(2), 232–247.

Fotiadis, A., Xie, L., Li, Y., & Huan, T.C. (2016). Attracting athletes to small-scale sports events using motivational decision-making factors. *Journal of Business Research, 69*(11), 5467–5472.

Fourie, J., & Santana-Gallego, M. (2011). The impact of mega-sport events on tourist arrivals. *Tourism Management, 32*(6), 1364–1370.

Funk, D. C., & Bruun, T. J. (2007). The role of socio-psychological and culture-education motives in marketing international sport tourism: A cross-cultural perspective. *Tourism Management, 28*(3), 806–819.

Funk, D. C., & James, J. (2001). The psychological continuum model: A conceptual framework for understanding an individual's psychological connection to sport. *Sport Management Review, 4*(2), 119–150.

Georgiadis, T., Spiliopoulos, P., Rampotas, C., & Rampotas, G. (2006). Motivation and volunteer participation in the Athens 2004 Olympic Games. *Choregia Sport Management International Journal, 2*(1/2), 65–89.

Getz, D., & Andersson, T. D. (2010). The event–tourist career trajectory: A study of high-involvement amateur

distance runners. *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism, 10*(4), 468–491.

Getz, D., & Brown, G. (2006). Critical success factors for wine tourism regions: A demand analysis. *Tourism Management, 27*(1), 146–158.

Getz, D., & McConnell, A. (2014). Comparing trail runners and mountain bikers: Motivation, involvement, portfolios, and event-tourist careers. *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism, 15*(1), 69–100.

Gibson, H. J., Kaplanidou, K., & Kang, S. J. (2012). Small-scale event sport tourism: A case study in sustainable tourism. *Sport Management Review, 15*(2), 160–170.

Gibson, H., McIntyre, S., MacKay, S., & Riddington, G. (2005). The economic impact of sports, sporting events, and sports tourism in the UK The DREAM™ Model. *European Sport Management Quarterly, 5*(3), 321–332.

Gibson, H. J., Willming, C., & Holdna, A. (2003). Small-scale event sport tourism fans as tourists. *Tourism Management, 24*(2), 181–190.

Goossens, C. (2000). Tourism information and pleasure motivation. *Annals of Tourism Research, 27*(2), 301–321.

Green, B. C., & Chalip, L. (1998). Sport tourism as the celebration of subculture. *Annals of Tourism Research,* 25(2), 275–291.

Gröpel, P., Wegner, M., & Schüler, J. (2016). Achievement motive and sport participation. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 27*, 93–100

Hair, J. F. Jr., Black, W. C., Babin, B. J., & Anderson, R. E. (2010). *Multivariate data analysis* (7th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Hair, J. F. Jr., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, M. (2014). *A primer on partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM).* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hallmann, K., & Harms, G. (2012). Determinants of volunteer motivation and their impact on future voluntary engagement: A comparison of volunteers' motivation at sport events in equestrian and handball. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management, 3*(3), 272–291.

Halpenny, E. A., Kulczycki, C., & Moghimehfar, F. (2016). Factors effecting destination and event loyalty: Examining the sustainability of a recurrent small-scale running event at Banff National Park. *Journal of Sport & Tourism, 20*(3–4), 233–262.

Harris, R. (2014). The role of large-scale sporting events in host community education for sustainable development: An exploratory case study of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. *Event Management, 18*(3), 207–230.

Healy, L. C., Ntoumanis, N., & Duda, J. L. (2016). Goal motives and multiple-goal striving in sport and academia: A person-centered investigation of goal motives and inter-goal relations. *Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport, 19*(12), 1010–1014.

Higham, J. (1999). Commentary—Sport as an avenue of tourism development: An analysis of the positive and negative impacts of sport tourism. *Current Issues in Tourism, 2*(1), 82–90.

Israel, G. D. (1992). *Sampling the evidence of extension program impact.* University of Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agriculture Sciences, EDIS.

Iwasaki, Y., & Havitz, M. E. (2004). Examining relationships between leisure involvement, psychological commitment and loyalty to a recreation agency. *Journal of Leisure Research, 36*(1), 45–72.

Jackson, G., & Reeves, M. (1998). Evidencing the sport-tourism interrelationship: A case study of elite British athletes. In M. F. Collins & I. S. Cooper (Eds.), *Leisure management: Issues and applications* (pp. 263–275). Wallingford, UK: CAB International.

Janssens, W., Wijnen, K., de Pelsmacker, P., & Van Kenhove, P. (2008). *Marketing research with SPSS.* Essex, UK: Pearson Education.

Katsoni, V., & Vrondou, O. (2017). Marketing to occasional sporting event tourists: Profiles, travelling patterns, and information channels. *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events, 9*(2), 152–168.

Kerr, J. H., & Houge Mackenzie, S. (2012). Multiple motives for participating in adventure sports. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 13*(5), 649–657.

Kim, J. W., James, J. D., & Kim, Y. K. (2013). A model of the relationship among sport consumer motives, spectator commitment, and behavioral intentions. *Sport Management Review, 16*(2), 173–185.

Knowles, E. S., & Condon, C. A. (1999). Why people say "yes": A dual-process theory of acquiescence. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 77*(2), 379–386.

Kyle, G. T., Absher, J. D., Hammitt, W. E., & Cavin, J. (2006). An examination of the motivation–involvement relationship. *Leisure Sciences,* 28(5), 467–485.

Laurent, G., & Kapferer, J-N. (1985). Measuring consumer involvement profiles. *Journal of Marketing Research, 22*(1), 41–53.

Lauterborn, B. (1990). New marketing litany: Four Ps passé: C-words take over. *Advertising Age, 61*(41), 26.

Lee, C., & Taylor, T. (2005). Critical reflections on the economic impact assessment of a mega-event: The case of 2002 FIFA world cup. *Tourism Management, 26*(4), 595–603.

Lee, J. S., Lee, C. K., & Park, C. K. (2014). Developing and validating a multidimensional quality scale for mega-events. *International Journal of Hospitality Management, 43*, 121–131.

Lee, Y., Kim, M., & Koo, J. (2016). The impact of social interaction and team member exchange on sport event volunteer management. *Sport Management Review, 19*(5), 550–562.

Lera-López, F., Ollo-López, A., & Rapún-Gárate, M. (2012). Sports spectatorship in Spain: Attendance and consumption. *European Sport Management Quarterly, 12*(3), 265–289.

Li, M., & Cai, L. A. (2012). The effects of personal values on travel motivation and behavioral Intention. *Journal of Travel Research, 51*(4), 473–487.

Lindell, M. K., & Whitney, D. J. (2001). Accounting for common method variance in cross- sectional research designs. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 86*(1), 114–121.

Little, R. J. A. (1988). A test of missing completely at random for multivariate data with missing values. *Journal of the American Statistical Association, 83*(404), 1198–1202.

Loureiro, S. M. C., & González, F. J. M. (2008). The importance of quality, satisfaction, trust, and image in relation to rural tourist loyalty. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 25*(2), 117–136.

Malhotra, N. R. (2007). *Marketing research, an applied orientation* (5th ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

McGehee, N. G., Yoon, Y., & Cárdenas, D. (2003). Involvement and travel for recreational runners in North Carolina. *Journal of Sport Management, 17*(3), 305–324.

Nicolau, J. L., & Mas, F. J. (2006). The influence of distance and prices on the choice of tourist destinations: The moderating role of motivations. *Tourism Management, 27*(5), 982–996.

Ogles, B. M., & Masters, K. S. (2003). A typology of marathon runners based on cluster analysis of motivations. *Journal of Sport Behavior, 26*(1), 69–85.

Oppermann, M., & Chon, K-S. (1997). Convention participation decision-making process. *Annals of Tourism Research, 24*(1), 178–191.

Pham, T. M. (1992). Effects of involvement, arousal, and pleasure on the recognition of sponsorship stimuli. *Advances in Consumer Research, 19*(1), 85–93.

Podsakoff, P. M., MacKenzie, S. B., Lee, J-Y., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2003). Common method biases in behavioral research: A critical review of the literature and recommended remedies. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 88*(5), 879–903.

Ritchie, B. J. R., & Smith, B. H. (1991). The impact of a mega-event on host-region awareness: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Travel Research, 30*(1), 3–10.

Robbins, D., Dickinson, J., & Calver, S. (2007). Planning transport for special events: A conceptual framework and future agenda for research. *International Journal of Tourism Research,* 9(5), 303–314.

Robinson, T., & Gammon, S. (2004). A question of primary and secondary motives: Revisiting and applying the sport tourism framework. *Journal of Sport Tourism, 9*(3), 221–233.

Rothschild, M. L. (1984). Perspectives on involvement: Current problems and future directions. *Advances in Consumer Research, 11*, 216–217.

Ryan, C., & Trauer, B. (2005). Sport tourist behaviour: The example of the Masters Games. In J. Higham (Ed.), *Sport tourism destinations: Issues, opportunities and analysis* (pp. 177–187). Oxford, UK: Elsevier.

Sallent, O., Palau, R., & Guia, J. (2011). Exploring the legacy of sport events on sport tourism networks. *European Sport Management Quarterly, 11*(4), 397–421.

Sato, M., Jordan, J. S., & Funk, D. C. (2016). A distance-running event and life satisfaction: The mediating roles of involvement. *Sport Management Review, 19*(5), 536–549.

Scheiner, J., & Holz-Rau, C. (2007). Travel mode choice: Affected by objective or subjective determinants? *Transportation, 34*(4), 487–511.

Shih, D. (1986). VALS as a tool of tourism market research: The Pennsylvania experience. *Journal of Travel Research, 24*(4), 2–11.

Smith, R. E., Smoll, F. L., & Cumming, S. P. (2007). Effects of a motivational climate intervention for coaches on young athletes' sport performance anxiety. *Journal of Sport & Exercise Psychology, 29*(1), 39–59.

Smith, R. E., Smoll, F. L., Cumming, S. P., & Grossbard, J. R. (2006). Measurement of multidimensional sport performance anxiety in children and adults: The sport anxiety scale-2. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, 28*(4), 479–501.

Stokes, R. (2008). Tourism strategy making: Insights to the events tourism domain. *Tourism Management, 29*(2), 252–262.

Tinsley, H. E. A., & Tinsley, D. J. (1986). A theory of the attributes, benefits, and causes of leisure experience. *Leisure Sciences, 8*(1), 1–45.

Turco, D. M., Swart, K., Umilla, B., & Moodley, V. (2003). Socio-economic impacts of sport tourism in the Durban Unicity, South Africa. *Journal of Sport & Tourism, 8*(4), 223–239.

Weed, M., & Bull, C. (2011). *Sport tourism: Participants, policy and providers*. Oxford, UK: Elsevier Butterworth Heinemann.

Wegner, M., Bohnacker, V., Mempel, G., Teubel, T., & Schüler, J. (2014). Explicit and implicit affiliation motives predict verbal and nonverbal social behavior in sports competition. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise, 15*(6), 588–595.

Wiley, C. G., Shaw, S. M., & Havitz, M. E. (2000). Men's and women's involvement in sports: An examination of the gendered aspects of leisure involvement. *Leisure Sciences, 22*(1), 19–31.

Williams, D. R., Patterson, M. E., Roggenbuck, J. W., & Watson, A. E. (1992). Beyond the commodity metaphor: Examining emotional and symbolic attachment to place. *Leisure Sciences, 14*(1), 29–46.

Wilson, R. (2006). The economic impact of local sport events: Significant, limited or otherwise? A case study of four swimming events. *Managing Leisure, 11*(1), 57–70.

Yolal, M., Gursoy, D., Uysal, M., Kim, H., & Karacaoğlu, S. (2016). Impacts of festivals and events on residents' well-being. *Annals of Tourism Research, 61*, 1–18.

Young, F. W. (2013). *Multidimensional scaling: History, theory, and applications*. New York, NY: Psychology Press.